

## **Summer 2015 #TexasToDo's**

From million dollar renovations and expansions to grand openings of highly anticipated restaurants and hotels, this year is proving to be an exciting time across the state. Add these top activities to your #TexasToDo list to experience the Lone Star State like never before!

### **NEW STAYS**

New hotels are popping up across the Lone Star State and they're waiting for you to visit. In Austin, the largest [JW Marriott](#) in the Americas opened its doors in February in time for South by Southwest 2015, while the [South Congress Hotel](#) is taking reservations for its opening on August 1. The hotel was designed by architect [Michael Hsu](#) while [Studio MAI](#) in Los Angeles designed the interior. *Food and Wine* Best Chef and *Top Chef* Winner Paul Qui will also open a sushi restaurant, Took, in the hotel.

Just south of Austin, the [Hyatt Lost Pines Resort](#) offers an abundance of both indoor and outdoor activities great for the entire family, as well as downtime for Mom and Dad. In summer 2015, the [Renegade Trailhead](#) courses bring the joy of the outdoors to resort guests, offering trail rides, trap shooting, archery, fishing and more. The rustic, lodge-like Renegade Trailhead is located along the resort's winding entry drive, and a guest shuttle is available from the resort lobby. Instructors provide safety equipment and guidelines for all activities to ensure that guests are comfortable prior to experiencing their great outdoor adventure.

Less than half a mile from Dallas' historic West End, the new [Westin Dallas](#) will include 27,000 square feet of meeting space and new restaurant and bar space on the lower floors of the tower. Additionally, Dallas' historic [Statler Hilton](#) hotel will soon be flying the Hilton flag again after a \$175 million redevelopment. The 59-year-old Downtown landmark, empty for more than a decade, will be converted into 161 hotel rooms and 219 residences.

Later in the year, [Hotel Emma](#) will open its stellar doors at the Pearl Brewery in San Antonio, one of the city's vibrant food neighborhoods, to showcase San Antonio's culinary bounty and evolution, on a new level: thinking of guests as chefs. Solely driven by the South Texas terroir, from the culinary concierge to cooking demos in the lobby, guests will find culinary touches elegantly incorporated into every facet of their experience.

For new experiences at Galveston lodging venues, visit the new [Doubletree by Hilton Galveston Beach Hotel](#) which opened to the public in February 2015. Or, stay at the waterfront [Harbor House Hotel & Marina at Pier 21](#), which recently unveiled a full renovation.

### **WORLD HERITAGE SITE NOMINEES -- THE SAN ANTONIO MISSIONS**

San Antonio's Spanish colonial missions, including the Alamo, are gaining global recognition as the United States nominated them for inclusion on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's World Heritage List. UNESCO recognizes the most significant cultural and natural sites in the world such as Stonehenge and the Great Wall of China. If awarded, the missions would be the first World Heritage Site in the State of Texas and only the 24th in the United States.

### **NEW NON-STOP INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS**

Texas is accessible from all emerging markets and traditional markets with more and more non-stop international flights being added throughout the Lone Star State. DFW continues as one of only seven airports in the world offering service to more than 200 destinations. This year, DFW saw the launch of new service to Shanghai and Hong Kong by American Airlines, as well as to Doha, Qatar by Qatar Airways, and to Abu Dhabi by Etihad Airways. Also, Emirates Airline and Qantas Airways

expanded their service from DFW to Dubai and Sydney, respectively, by adding the Airbus A380, the largest passenger aircraft in the world. In 2015, the international non-stop list continues to grow including the following flights:

- Air Canada non-stop from Toronto to Austin
- VivaAerobus non-stop from Guadalajara to IAH (Houston) and Cancun to IAH (Houston)
- VivaAerobus non-stop from Guadalajara to DFW Airport and Monterrey to DFW
- Interjet non-stop from Monterrey to IAH (Houston)
- All Nippon Airway (ANA) non-stop flight from Tokyo, Japan to IAH (Houston) beginning June 2015
- Eva Air non-stop flight from Taipei, Taiwan to IAH (Houston) beginning June 2015

### **ON TAP**

Beer connoisseurs will stay busy trying all of the new brews at the many recently opened breweries across the Lone Star State. In Dallas, [Texas Ale Project](#) (TAP) opened in January and is the first brewery to be built from the ground up in the city since the late 1800s. The brewery offers free tours every Saturday at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. In Lakewood, [On Rotation](#) opened its doors in March and promises to go beyond ordinary in every way, by merging brewery with tasting room and growler station.

In January of 2015, [South Concho Taphouse](#) (SoCo Taphouse) in San Angelo was founded, and its doors officially opened on March 27. A few hours east, the [Sequin Brewing Company](#) has been distributing its brews since November but just recently opened for tours in April. Keep an eye out for more openings this year as well. [Bare Arms Brewing](#) in Waco is planning its grand opening for July, while [City Acre Brewing](#) in Houston recently received approvals for construction and plans to open later in the year.

### **NEW EATS**

A new bar, [Paramour](#), is set to open in downtown San Antonio early fall 2015. Paramour's rooftop patio will overlook the San Antonio skyline and [River Walk](#) Museum Reach from the top of the new Phipps building.

[Robard's Steakhouse](#), named after Texan hero Howard Robard Hughes, Jr., is an upscale Prohibition-era steakhouse that boasts an in-house butchery and dry-aging room alongside an impressive wine and cocktail program.

In Dallas, former [Mexican Sugar](#) chef Eric Justice transformed an abandoned Sonic drive-in into a laid-back, chef-driven restaurant; [Spork](#). Expect pretzel-crust chicken tenders, bulgogi kimchi fries, burgers with unique toppings, and a full bar with specialty cocktails.

### **THRILLS AND AMUSEMENTS**

The No. 1 kid-friendly destination in Texas, [Schlitterbahn](#) has been named the top waterpark in the world for 16 consecutive years by *Amusement Today*. The park has multiple locations across Texas, and its newest park opens this summer in [Corpus Christi](#). With indoor and outdoor waterparks, a beach country club including golf and tennis, and a full service restaurant open for lunch, dinner, weekday happy hour and Sunday brunch, Schlitterbahn will keep the whole family entertained.

Opened May 22, [Gorillas of the African Forest at the Houston Zoo](#) is a \$28 million natural habitat, Phase 2 of the African Forest project that opened in 2010. The habitat will feature a waterfall, a flowing stream, and a boardwalk for visitors to get a closer look at the gorillas. The project will also

include construction of a gorilla night house: a large climate-controlled area where the gorillas will sleep and stay during inclement weather. Zoo officials initially plan to bring in four to six gorillas, a number expected to expand to 10 to 15 when the family grows.

[Batman: The Ride](#), a new world class 4D Free Fly Coaster that thrusts riders into a totally immersive, high-speed Gotham City adventure over the top of a 120-foot hill, is coming to [Six Flags Fiesta Texas](#) in San Antonio this summer. Meanwhile at [Six Flags Over Texas](#) in Arlington, [Justice League: Battle for Metropolis](#) has just opened. It's the ultimate superheroes adventure mission as guests tour the fully immersive 4D Hall of Justice, where they battle villains with stun guns and take a swift ride through lifelike animatronics and cutting edge special effects.

### **HOUSTONS BUFFALO BAYOU PARK RENOVATION (Spring 2015)**

[Buffalo Bayou Park's](#) renovation will be completed in spring 2015. The transformation of the 160-acre, 2.3-mile stretch of Buffalo Bayou is a \$58 million project led by the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, the City of Houston's Houston Parks and Recreation Department, and the Harris County Flood Control District with catalyst funding from the Kinder Foundation. Construction began in summer 2012 to restore the area to a more natural and self-sustaining state, reintroduce native landscapes and add amenities to enhance safety and convenience for visitors. Improvements will include:

- Upgraded or new trails for walkers and hikers to enjoy nature including places for canoes and kayaks to launch
- Two pedestrian bridges
- An extension of the distinctive blue lunar cycle lighting design
- New destination features such as The Water Works adjacent to the Lee and Joe Jamail Skatepark, Lost Lake near Dunlavy and Allen Parkway, a dog park near Studemont and Allen Parkway and modifications to a portion of Eleanor Tinsley Park

### **DALLAS CITY PASS**

Explore the Big D's most popular attractions with a discount and without waiting in lines! Visitors and locals alike can now buy a booklet with bundled, discounted and prepaid admission to four top attractions around the city. The [CityPASS](#) grants you admission to the top sites including [Reunion Tower](#), [Perot Museum of Nature and Science](#), [Dallas Zoo](#), [Dallas Arboretum](#) and more for \$44 for adults and \$30 for children.

### **THE BRYAN MUSEUM**

A new museum showcasing the world's largest private collection of Southwestern historical artifacts opened on May 15 in Galveston, displaying 70,000 rare items dating from the pre-Columbian period to the present. [The Bryan Museum](#) will offer visitors the chance to take a remarkable journey through the rich history of the American Southwest with a collection that boasts extraordinary artifacts, books, documents, maps, paintings and drawings. The collection will be housed at the former [Galveston Orphans Home](#) landmark. The lower level of the museum will feature a children's area, where youth can have a "fantasy ocean" experience complete with floor-to-ceiling, sea-themed murals and a kids cave that leads to an interactive Jean Lafitte ship and cannon exhibit. Here, kids can learn about Jean Lafitte and the history of the Port of Galveston, participate in art classes, workshops and more. An exhibit on the history of the Galveston Orphans Home is adjacent to the children's area.

### **SAN ANTONIO DoSEUM**

The San Antonio Children's Museum opened at its new location—and with its new name—in June.

The DoSeum will be comprised of a series of three, two-story exhibit halls totaling 65,000 square feet. Between each exhibit hall, glass facades will create daylight-flooded transitional spaces that connect visitors to the additional 39,000 square feet of outdoor exhibit yards. All exhibits incorporate the idea of letting children learn by doing. Envisioned as a museum set in a park, the building will be surrounded by meandering pathways that offer a sense of surprise, beautiful gardens that captivate the senses and shady places for families to relax or for school groups to unwind.